

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL DIRECTIVE

On

COVERT OPERATIONS

1. The National Security Council, taking cognizance of the vicious covert activities of the USSR and Communist China and the governments, parties and groups dominated by them (hereafter collectively referred to as "International Communism") to discredit and defeat the aims and activities of the United States and other powers of the free world, determined, as set forth in NSC directives 10/2 and 10/5, that, in the interests of world peace and U. S. national security, the overt foreign activities of the U. S. Government should be supplemented by covert operations.

2. The Central Intelligence Agency had already been charged by the National Security Council with conducting espionage and counterespionage operations abroad. It therefore seemed desirable, for operational reasons, not to create a new agency for covert operations, but, subject to directives from the NSC, to place the responsibility for them on the Central Intelligence Agency and correlate them with espionage and counterespionage operations under the over-all control of the Director of Central Intelligence.

3. The NSC has determined that such covert operations shall to the greatest extent practicable, in the light of U. S. and Soviet capabilities and taking into account the risk of war, be designed to:

*M. J. H.*  
a. Create

- a. Create and exploit troublesome problems for International Communism, impair relations between the USSR and Communist China and between them and their satellites, complicate control within the USSR, Communist China and their satellites, and retard the growth of the military and economic potential of the Soviet bloc;
- b. Discredit the prestige and ideology of International Communism, and reduce the strength of its parties and other elements;
- c. Counter any threat of a party or individuals directly or indirectly responsive to Communist control to achieve dominant power in a free world country;
- d. Reduce International Communist control over any areas of the world;
- e. Strengthen the orientation toward the United States of the peoples and nations of the free world, accentuate, wherever possible, the identity of interest between such peoples and nations and the United States as well as favoring, where appropriate, those groups genuinely advocating or believing in the advancement of such mutual interests, and increase the capacity and will of such peoples and nations to resist International Communism;
- f. In accordance with established policies and to the extent practicable in areas dominated or threatened by International Communism, develop underground resistance and

Facilitate

facilitate covert and guerrilla operations and ensure availability of those forces in the event of war, including wherever practicable provision of a base upon which the military may expand these forces in time of war within active theaters of operations as well as provision for stay-behind assets and escape and evasion facilities.

4. Under the authority of Section 102 (d) (5) of the National Security Act of 1947, the National Security Council hereby directs that the Director of Central Intelligence shall be responsible for:

a. Ensuring, through designated representatives of the Secretary of State and of the Secretary of Defense, that covert operations are planned and conducted in a manner consistent with United States foreign and military policies and with overt activities, and consulting with and obtaining advice from the Operations Coordinating Board and other departments or agencies as appropriate.

b. Informing, through appropriate channels and on a need-to-know basis agencies of the U. S. Government, both at home and abroad (including diplomatic and military representatives) of such operations as will affect them.

5. In addition to the provisions of paragraph 4, the following provisions shall apply to wartime covert operations:

a. Plans for covert operations to be conducted in active theaters of war and any other areas in which U. S. forces are engaged

PS No. 91708-F

engaged in combat operations will be drawn up with the assistance of the Department of Defense and will be in consonance with and complementary to approved war plans of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

b. Covert operations in active theaters of war and any other areas in which U. S. forces are engaged in combat operations will be conducted under such command and control relationships as have been or may in the future be approved by the Department of Defense.

6. As used in this directive, "covert operations" shall be understood to be all activities conducted pursuant to this directive which are so planned and executed that any U. S. Government responsibility for them is not evident to unauthorized persons and that if uncovered the U. S. Government can plausibly disclaim any responsibility for them. Specifically, such operations shall include any covert activities related to: propaganda; political action; economic warfare; preventive direct action, including sabotage, anti-sabotage, demolition; escape and evasion and evacuation measures; subversion against hostile states or groups including assistance to underground resistance movements, guerrillas and refugee liberation groups; support of indigenous and anti-communist elements in threatened countries of the free world; deception plans and operations; and all activities compatible with this directive necessary to accomplish the foregoing. Such operations shall not include:

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TS No. 91708-F

armed conflict by recognized military forces, espionage and counter-espionage, nor cover and deception for military operations.

7. This directive supersedes and rescinds NSC 10/2 and NSC 10/5. Subparagraphs "a" and "b" under the heading "Additional Functions of the Operations Coordinating Board" on page 1 of the President's memorandum for the Executive Secretary, National Security Council supplementing Executive Order 10483 are superseded by the following provisions:

- a. The members of the Operations Coordinating Board shall, under appropriate security arrangements, be advised of those covert operations related to National Security Council policies assigned to the Board for coordination or related to such other functions as may be assigned to the Board.
- b. The designated representatives of the Secretaries of State and Defense referred to in paragraph 4.a. above shall keep the Board Members of their respective departments advised as to matters on which they are consulted by the Director of Central Intelligence, and which have been or are to be referred to the Operations Coordinating Board.
- c. The Operations Coordinating Board will be the normal channel for securing coordination of support among the Departments of State and Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency.

EB 16 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. [REDACTED]  
Executive Secretary  
National Security Council

SUBJECT: NSC 10 Series Directives

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There is attached a copy of a draft directive to supersede NSC 10/2 and NSC 10/5, and certain provisions of the President's memorandum to the Executive Secretary, National Security Council supplementing Executive Order 10483. The purpose of this draft is to incorporate in one currently applicable document the directive relating to covert operations by the Central Intelligence Agency.

This draft has been approved by the Under Secretary of State, General Smith, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, Mr. Kyes, and the Director of Central Intelligence. It is transmitted to you so that it may be appropriately considered by the National Security Council and, if approved by it, submitted to the President.

ALLEN W. DULLES  
Director

*hand carried*  
[REDACTED]

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Attachments: 2  
TS No. 91708-F, Copy #1  
TS No. 91708-E, Copy #2  
[REDACTED]

(10 February 1954)

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TS No. 91737

*70 pages*

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Official

11 February 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: NSC 10 Series Directives

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I called [redacted] at the NSC since [redacted] is out of town. He was familiar with the procedure previously used for handling NSC 10 series documents. He said that if a copy was sent to the Executive Secretary of NSC with a memorandum saying that the paper had been approved by General Smith, [redacted] and yourself, it would then be circulated by hand to the statutory members of the NSC and, if approved by them, submitted to the President.

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There is attached such a memorandum to [redacted] together with a clean copy of the revised directive.

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[redacted]  
Special Assistant to the Director

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Att.

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